

Memphis Holds First-Ever Live Internet Broadcast!

Tuesday, January 15, 2002 was a historic day for the City of Memphis for two reasons: City government produced its first-ever live Internet broadcast and it was one of the first-ever State of the City addresses to be delivered to the Rotary Club in City Council Chambers at City Hall by Mayor Willie W. Herenton.

"This is just the beginning," said Gale Jones Carson, executive assistant to Mayor Willie W. Herenton. "Our goal is to make City government more accessible to the citizens and the Internet is a great way to achieve that goal."

In his address to a crowd of more than 125 Rotarians and members of the press, Mayor Herenton triumphantly stated that the City of Memphis is fiscally strong. "I am proud to tell you that we (City of Memphis) are financially solvent," Herenton said. "Our fiscal health is something that we are extremely proud of, especially during a time when Shelby County government and the State of Tennessee face financial hardship," he added.

The mayor also mentioned the Memphis Grizzlies, downtown expansion and economic investment and neighborhood revitalization as some of Memphis's most outstanding achievements in 2001.

Herenton focused on the consolidation of city and county governments as he gave insight into his goals and objectives for City government this year and years to come. "My goal is to provide leadership to the achievement of one government for Shelby County," Herenton said. "One government. Just as the other three metropolitan counties in Tennessee, one government. We can combine the legislative bodies, the City Council and the County Commission to form one consolidated legislative body with one chief executive officer – one Mayor."

"We must change. I am convinced that if we keep the same bifurcated governmental system and we continue to increase taxes in the county, we are going to make Shelby County and Memphis less competitive in the market place," Herenton added. "We are going to drive people out of Memphis and Shelby County, and we are going to drive investments to Mississippi and to Fayette County. The duplication of services will end. We will have one metropolitan government that is more efficient and more effective," Herenton added. "I think it will be easier on our pocketbooks in the long run."

Acknowledging the challenges that face consolidation efforts in regards to other municipalities in Shelby County, the mayor asserted that "other municipalities such as Bartlett and Germantown must realize that they cannot be an island unto themselves and that they are a part of the greater metropolitan area."

If you missed the live broadcast, do not to worry. A streaming video of his remarks will be available online at www.cityofmemphis.org on Friday, January 18, 2002. Simply click on the appropriate banner and follow the instructions to view the video.

